

VZCZCXRO2272

OO RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHMT RUEHNG
RUEHNL RUEHQU RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC

DE RUEHTG #1051/01 2891711

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 161711Z OCT 09

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0899

INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY

RHMFSS/CDR JTF-BRAVO PRIORITY

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 1220

RHMFSS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RHMFSS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001051

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/16/2119

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: ZELAYA NEGOTIATORS BELIEVE AGREEMENT NEAR

TEGUCIGALP 00001051 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b & d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Negotiators for President Manuel "Mel" Zelaya expressed optimism that an agreement on the Guaymuras accords would be reached October 16, in a meeting that morning with the Ambassador and DCM. Zelaya negotiators Minister of Governance Victor Meza and Rodil Rivera Rodil told the Ambassador that they believed that the two sides were ready to sign the agreement, including the article that requires Congress to restore officials to pre-coup positions. Compromise language would call on the Congress to consult with other government institutions, including the Supreme Court, as requested by de facto regime head Roberto Micheletti. While optimistic, Meza said that it was still possible that Micheletti would reject the compromise. It is also possible that National Party leaders could attempt to spike a deal, believing that there election changes are better with the country in chaos and the Liberal Party in tatters. If a deal is reached, we are prepared to work with Congress, leaders this weekend to make sure the accord is implemented rapidly. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Meza described how an agreement had been reached between the two negotiating teams on Wednesday, October 14, but that when Micheletti,s negotiating team reported the results to him, Micheletti had rejected them. Meza confirmed reports that once news of the agreement had leaked, a group of business leaders rushed to Micheletti,s office to urge him to reject the accord. Micheletti therefore announced that any agreement on restoration would have to go to the Supreme Court instead of the Congress. (Comment: Given that the court had been the leading force in the coup against Zelaya, the likely assumption was that the court would reject the agreement. End comment.) Micheletti,s team returned to the negotiating table October 15 with no counter proposal, according to Meza, but due to pressure from Zelaya,s team and the OAS mediators, eventually agreed to a compromise in which the accord would call upon the Congress to restore officials (including Zelaya) to their June 27 positions, after consulting with the Supreme Court and other institutions.

¶3. (C) Negotiations were due to restart at 10:30 am local time according to Meza. He expected that the Micheletti,s side would announce agreement to the compromise language, but

expressed concern that Micheletti would once again walk back from the agreement. He said that Zelaya had extended his October 15 deadline through noon October 16, but that he was under tremendous pressure from his supporters to stick to this deadline. The Ambassador agreed with Meza's observation that the October 15 deadline had helped move the talks forward, but urged him not to let any deadline get in the way of talks that could lead to a solution. Meza also warned that a failure of the talks would lead to call by Zelaya for opposition to the November 29 election. The Ambassador urged Meza and Rodil to concentrate on getting an agreement and said that a move against the election by Zelaya would put him on the anti-democratic side of the issue, allowing Micheletti to claim that he was pro-democratic, an ironic twist given that Zelaya was the democratically elected president overthrown in a coup by Micheletti.

¶4. (C) Meza said that it was fitting that the Congress would be the institution to restore constitutional order as it had played a major role in breaking that order on June 28. The Ambassador and Meza agreed that the Congress could move quickly, given support from a coalition of National Party, dissident Liberal Party, and leftist party members. (Note: There are reports that National Party leaders do not want the accord to go to the Congress, believing that an accord could hurt their presidential prospects in November, but knowing that their Congressional membership is likely to support an accord.) Honduras, he said was on the verge of quickly righting the wrongs of June 28; a move which would also prompt Honduras, reentry into the world community and deal with hemispheric concerns over the loss of democracy in one of its countries.

¶5. (C) Comment: Meza's analysis is right on the mark. Negotiators from both sides are ready to move this forward.

TEGUCIGALP 00001051 002.2 OF 002

We believe that Congress is also ready to act, although there are concerns that Nationalist Party candidate Pepe Lobo and former President Ricardo Maduro may actually be opposing an agreement behind the scenes and are pressing Micheletti not agree to the compromise text. The Nationalists believe that a final agreement to political crisis may help bring the Liberals back together and hurt Pepe Lobo's candidacy. Last night the Ambassador urged both Maduro and Lobo to back a deal that has the support of the vast majority of the Honduran people (septel). They said they wanted to be helpful, but were unwilling to fully commit.

¶6. (C) Comment continued: If a deal breaks down, the political situation in Honduras will quickly deteriorate and the prospects for violence will increase. If a deal is reached, we plan to work with the Congressional leadership of all parties to ensure that Congress gives the Guaymuras Accord full consideration and that it is approved expeditiously. While consultations with the Supreme Court could be an issue, the compromise allows the Congress to keep control of the decision-making process. Soccer, which has played a political role in Honduras, past, may play one here as well. Honduras's entry into World Cup finals Wednesday has instilled a sense of optimism across the country, perhaps creating a climate that will allow a leap of faith into acceptance of the Guaymuras accords.

LLORENS